
Asian Gypsy Moth

September 2021

Asian gypsy moth (AGM) is a serious pest that can be carried on ships and cargo. AGM populations are prevalent in some seaport areas in Far East Russia, Japan, Korea, and Northern China. If introduced to North America, AGM would have significant negative impacts on our forestry and agriculture, the natural environment, the commerce that relies on those plant resources, and market access.

Vessels must arrive in North American ports free of AGM and should be inspected and certified free of AGM prior to entering United States (U.S.) waters. It is vital that the maritime industry and authorities in the U.S. collaborate on measures to minimize the risk of AGM incursion.

The United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Agency (APHIS) is aware that in a small number of foreign ports AGM certification bodies are not being allowed to board vessels due to current local COVID-19 restrictions.

Ships are responsible for arriving in U.S. ports free of AGM regardless of whether they are able to obtain a pre-departure inspection in Asia. If AGM is detected on any ship, that ship may experience delays and/or be ordered out of U.S. waters.

Ships that are refused an AGM inspection and certification due to COVID-19 should:

- Consider another port for inspection and certification
- Obtain written notice of refusal
- Prior to arrival in U.S. waters, email AGM@USDA.gov to inform APHIS of refusal, including written notice of refusal and a list of planned U.S. ports of call
- Conduct in depth self-inspections en route

APHIS will share vessel information with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) prior to the vessel's arrival so that CBP can be prepared for the arrival of uncertified vessels.

We strongly urge maritime interests to take all possible precautions. For further information on the AGM program, please visit the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's website (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/gypsy-moth>) or contact AGM@USDA.gov.